

Biomass Harvest Guidelines Sub-Group Meeting
DNRC Forestry Division Headquarters, Missoula
March 22, 2010
Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Jeff Schmalenberg, Brian Sugden, Len Broberg, Julia Altemus, Carla Monismith, Rob Ethridge, Joe Kerkvliet, Shawn Thomas, Julie Kies, Martin Twer, Roger Ziesak. By phone: Todd Morgan, Steve Hayes.

Minutes

The work of this sub-group has evolved out of the BMP sub-group to address a broader suite of issues of concern related to biomass harvest practices beyond water quality. The BMP modifications that we drafted will be presented for acceptance by the state BMP working group at their next meeting April 29.

The thinking of the group was to start with identifying issues of concern, then review current regs, guidelines, publications and education/outreach where Montana may have gaps, and then to work to fill those gaps.

The sub-group had a good brainstorm session which generated the following:

Resource risks/topics of concern related to biomass harvest/removal:

- Soil composition and productivity
- Biodiversity
- Deadwood-down and standing
- Legacy trees
- Wildlife
- Fire behavior (controlled burns/fuels reduction)

Who is audience?

- NIPF landowners
- IPF landowners
- State and federal land managers
- Forest practitioners
- Contractors

Assumptions

- Current biomass harvest is enhanced/add-on to traditional timber harvest activities
- Draft guidelines in anticipation of changes in biomass demand/further harvest

Anticipated Outputs

- Education
- Guidelines
- Broad recommendations

Thoughts to consider:

- What kinds of activity are we developing guidelines for?
- Where/can/should we give recommendations? Equipment operations, seasonality, how much retained on site?
- Soil mapping into physiographic regions (use USGS runoff maps?)
- Be cautious of being too site-specific and prescriptive
- Be adaptive in prescription/guidance
- Maintain an informed DNRC lands staff

Action Items: Members of the group volunteered for tasks:

- Review MT's existing voluntary wildlife guidelines and suggest revisions--Len B and Shawn T
- contact other states DNR offices to gauge their harvest activities and give MT a better sense of what we might anticipate—Joe K and Rob E
- compile most current reference materials related to biomass harvest—Julie K
- review biomass harvest guidelines from other states to inform development of MT's—Julia A and Julie K
- explore considerations for soils—Jeff S (Meredith W and Jason T)

Next Meeting: TBD sometime in late April/early May